



Office of the Chairman

Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

January 31, 2000

Open Letter To the Public:

The Surface Transportation Board (Board) is receiving a number of letters commenting on the recently proposed transaction to bring the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Canadian National (CN) railroad systems under common control. In this regard, by decision served in STB Finance Docket No. 33842 on December 28, 1999, the Board has given notice to the public that BNSF and CN have formally indicated that they intend to file an application for Board approval of the proposed transaction between March and June of this year. In addition, the Board announced in a decision served on January 24, 2000, in STB Ex Parte No. 582, that it would hold a hearing beginning on March 8, 2000, and take comments on major rail consolidations and the present and future structure of the North American rail industry.

On behalf of the Board, I thank all of you who are submitting comments to the Board on the BNSF/CN transaction. While we will not be able to send an individual response to each of your comments because of the steadily increasing volume, I assure you that we at the Board are carefully reviewing your comments, we are posting them on our website for all to see, and we are making them part of the public docket for both the BNSF/CN proceeding and the broader proceeding dealing with the present and future structure of the rail industry.

We very much appreciate the interest of each of the commenters in this important matter.

Sincerely,

Linda J. Morgan